

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 PORT A 01386 091828Z

66

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 AID-05 /033 W

----- 104489

R 091237Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9983

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PORT AU PRINCE 1386

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, PGOV, PINR, HA

SUBJECT: CUSTOMS OFFICIALS ARRESTED FOR FOOD THEFTS

1. LE MATIN MADE PUBLIC IN ITS JUNE 6 EDITION THE NEWS THAT INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES FROM THE DESSALINES BATTALION ARRESTED A NUMBER OF PORT CUSTOMS OFFICIALS ON JUNE 2 AND 3. IT REPORTED THAT ON JUNE 4 FINANCE SECRETARY BROS, ACCOMPANIED BY PORT CUSTOMS DIRECTOR PHALYNX NICOLAS AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR GUSTAVE DEJEAN, VISITED PORT CUSTOMS, WHERE, THE NEWSPAPER POINTED OUT, OPERATIONS ARE CRIPPLED IN SOME SECTIONS DUE TO THE ABSENCE OF ARRESTED AND OTHER EMPLOYEES. IT ALSO REPORTED THAT IT HAD JUST LEARNED THAT GIRARD EVEILLARD HAD RECENTLY REPLACED ANDRE MARTELLY AS AIRPORT CUSTOMS DIRECTOR.

2. COMMENT - THE ARRESTS APPARENTLY ARE THE RESULT OF DISCUSSIONS THAT TOOK PLACE IN APRIL AND MAY BETWEEN FINANCE AND CONADEP OFFICIALS, ON THE ONE HAND, AND FOREIGN VOLAG AGENCIES, ON THE OTHER. THE US VOLAGS (CARE, CHURCH WORLDSERVICES, CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICE) HANDLING PL-480 FOODSTUFFS ADVISED FINANCE THAT THEY HAD LARGELY MANAGED TO END THEIR THEFT LOSSES AT QJNKQKT#

BY (A) USING SEALAND CONTAINERS, AND (B) CLEARING SHIPMENTS IMMEDIATELY UPON ARRIVAL. WFP, HOWEVER, WHOSE FOOD GRAIN ARRIVED IN BULK, REPORTED SERIOUS THEFT LOSSES AT CUSTOMS, WHERE THEIR SHIPMENTS LAY UNCLEARED FOR WEEKS, WE UNDERSTAND THAT RELATIVELY LOW-LEVEL CUSTOMS EMPLOYEES WERE ARRESTED, INCLUDING THE BUILDING

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 PORT A 01386 091828Z

SECURITY CHIEF, AN EX-CONVICT, WHO ALLEGEDLY ORGANIZED

HIS GUARDS TO STEAL GRAIN AND TAKE IT TO HIS TRUCK. MOREOVER, A NUMBER OF SEALAND TRAILERS WERE ALLEGEDLY STOLEN OUT OF CUSTOMS CONTROL. AN INQUIRY COMMISSION IS NOW CONDUCTING A FULL INVESTIGATION.

3. WHILE THE ARRESTS WERE NOT DIRECTLY CONNECTED WITH THE RECENTLY ORGANIZED DROUGHT RELIEF PROGRAM FOR THE NORTHWEST, THEY PROVIDED A PUBLIC INDICATION OF GOH DETERMINATION TO SAFEGUARD FOOD SHIPMENTS JUST AS THE GOH AND THE US VOLAGS ARE ARRANGING TO RECEIVE AND DISTRIBUTE EMERGENCY FOOD SHIPMENTS FROM THE US AND OTHER FOREIGN DONORS.

4. LAST MAY A NUMBER OF PORT CUSTOMS EMPLOYEES WERE FIRED. WHILE POSSIBLY ELIMINATING SOME DEADWOOD, THIS CAUSED IMPORT CLEARANCE DELAYS THAT AFFECTED SOME LOCAL MANUFACTURERS. FOR EXAMPLE RAWLINGS, HAITI'S LARGEST BASEBALL PLANT, HAD TO SHUT DOWN FOR ONE WEEK. WITH THIS WEEK'S ARRESTS, PORT CUSTOMS MAY GO THROUGH ANOTHER PERIOD OF TEMPORARY NEAR PARALYSIS, BUT HOPEFULLY NOT IMPEDING HIGH PRIORITY EMERGENCY FOOD IMPORTS. IN FACT, ON JUNE 6 CUSTOMS OFFICIALS MOVED WITH UNPRECEDENTED SPEED TO CLEAR A PL-480 GRAIN SHIPMENT, SIGNING DOCUMENTS THE MOMENT THEY WERE PRESENTED.

ISHAM

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS RELEASES, CUSTOMS OFFICIALS, ARRESTS, THEFTS, FOOD ASSISTANCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975PORTA01386
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750200-1072
From: PORT AU PRINCE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750668/aaaackcw.tel
Line Count: 84
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 SEP 2003 by ellisoob>; APPROVED <05 NOV 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CUSTOMS OFFICIALS ARRESTED FOR FOOD THEFTS
TAGS: EAID, PGOV, PINR, HA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006